



The Novarupta



The 20th Century's Greatest Eruption

Many volcanoes erupt every year on earth, but few are large enough to capture worldwide attention, and even fewer still hold our attention decades later. The Novarupta-Katmai eruption that began on June 6, 1912 is one of the latter.

As one of the five largest volcanic eruptions in recorded history, it changed the history of the Alaska Peninsula and still captures the attention of volcanologists and explorers.

See pages 14-15 for more information on this impactful event.

What's Inside:

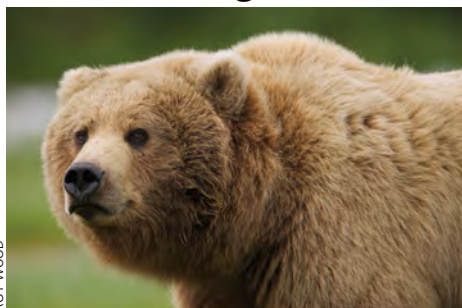
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ROY WOOD



ROY WOOD



Three National Parks, Many Amazing Experiences...



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Alagnak Wild River Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve Katmai National Park and Preserve

Katmai was declared a national monument in 1918; Aniakchak in 1978. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 established Alagnak Wild River, while Katmai and Aniakchak were expanded to include national preserve areas. Katmai was also redesignated a national park. Together, these lands encompass nearly five million acres of unique landscapes managed by the National Park Service.

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Welcome to Katmai Country

Welcome to Katmai National Park and Preserve, Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve, and the Alagnak Wild River! In these nearly five million acres of remote Alaska, you will discover ancient lands that are home to abundant wildlife, a diverse range of habitats, and spectacular scenery. The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes is a graphic reminder of the awesome power of our changing Earth.

These areas, along with the Becharof and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, offer wilderness, solace, recreation, and a livelihood for Native Alaskans and commercial fishermen of the area. Villages on the Alaska Peninsula are divided between two boroughs—Bristol Bay Borough and Lake and Peninsula Borough.

If your goal is to view the brown bears of Brooks River, please note that past patterns show peak bear use of the area in July and

September. Bears do visit the Brooks River in June and August, but with less frequency and in fewer numbers. See pages 10-11 for more information, and please be aware that when bear numbers at Brooks Camp are low, bear viewing opportunities at other locations in Katmai may be superb.

Katmai, Aniakchak and the Alagnak are among over 400 national park units across the nation, ranging from vast wilderness areas to historical sites in urban centers. National parks exist so that important parts of our heritage can be experienced by future generations. The Alaska Peninsula is home to many premier nationally protected areas. Enjoy them. Learn from them. Respect them and protect them. Above all, take time to experience these incredible places, and let them stir your soul.

Diane Chung
Superintendent



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Alagnak

Wild River

Unbounded by dams or artificial channels, the Alagnak River meanders its way from headwaters in the Aleutian Range across the Alaska Peninsula to Bristol Bay and the Bering Sea.



It traverses the beautiful Alaska Peninsula, providing opportunities to experience the unique wilderness, wildlife, and cultural heritage of southwest Alaska. Along its course to the sea, this wild river nourishes a place where humans work and play by nature's rules.

This river is one of the most popular sport fishing destinations in all of Alaska. The Alagnak's extraordinary rainbow trout, char, grayling, and abundant salmon are some of the most attractive sport fish in the world, and the river has become the most popular fly-in fishing destination in all of southwest Alaska.

See pages 22-23 for more information.

Aniakchak

National Monument and Preserve

Midway down the wild, remote, and mostly roadless Alaska Peninsula lies one of the nation's most fascinating, but least visited volcanic features. Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve surrounds a large caldera formed by the collapse of a 7,000 foot volcano. Set inland in a place of frequent clouds and fierce storms, Aniakchak was unknown to all but area Natives until the 1920s, and had its last eruption in 1931. Nestled inside the caldera is Surprise Lake, a remnant of a much larger lake that catastrophically drained in a massive flood. Warm springs, melting snow, and glaciers feed Surprise Lake, which in turn gives rise to the Aniakchak Wild River.



This narrow stretch of the Alaska Peninsula boasts a rich human history. Volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis have interrupted the human story, yet the land abides as a wild place where people can experience independence and interdependence. Life has persisted here in the face of catastrophic change.

See pages 20-21 for more information.

Katmai

National Park and Preserve

On June 6th, 1912 residents of the northern Alaska Peninsula experienced one of the largest volcanic eruptions in recorded history. The eruption at Novarupta volcano sent ash over 100,000 feet into the atmosphere, led to the collapse of Mount Katmai, and created the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.



Katmai National Monument was established in 1918 to protect the volcanically devastated region surrounding Mount Katmai and the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. Today, Katmai National Park and Preserve is still an active volcanic landscape, but it also protects 9,000 years of human history as well as important habitat for runs of salmon and the thousands of brown bears that feed on them.

Katmai is a rugged and diverse land where bears are plentiful, salmon leap waterfalls on their journey to spawn, steaming volcanoes serve as a reminder of the earth's power, and the stories of cultural change continue to live on.

See pages 6-18 for more information.



M. FITZ

Glacially shrouded volcanoes, like Mount Mageik, form the geologic backbone of the Alaska Peninsula. Katmai National Park is the site of the largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century (see pages 14-15).

Essential Information for Your Visit

Dates and Hours of Operation

Alagnak, Aniakchak, and Katmai are open 24 hours a day every day of the year. Access to and movement within the park lands may be limited or restricted at any time, however, depending on prevailing weather, security, and/or resource conditions and concerns. Most services such as lodges and air taxis operate seasonally.

National Park Service and concessionaire operated facilities at Brooks Camp, in Katmai National Park, are open from June 1 through September 17.

Fees and Reservations

There are no entrance fees associated with public use of Alagnak, Aniakchak, and Katmai.

Reservations and fees are required for camping in Brooks Campground and must be made by telephone or online prior to arrival at Brooks Camp. See pages 8-9 for more camping info.

Reservations also apply for public use of Fure's Cabin at the northeast corner of the Bay of Islands on Naknek Lake. Contact National Park Service headquarters in King Salmon for Fure's Cabin availability and reservations.

Visitor Centers

The **Brooks Camp Visitor Center**, open June 1–September 17, is the point of entry for all visitors to Brooks Camp. A park ranger is on duty to provide information, campground check-in, “Bear Etiquette” talks, and back-country planning. An Alaska Geographic Association (AGA) bookstore offers books, maps, and other Katmai-related items.

Located next door to the King Salmon Airport, the **King Salmon Visitor Center** provides information on the many federal public lands of Southwest Alaska, particularly those in the Bristol Bay area. A large collection of films is available for viewing and an AGA bookstore sells maps, charts, videos, posters, clothing and more. Contact the King Salmon Visitor Center at 907-246-4250.

Bears

This is bear country! All park lands on the Alaska Peninsula contain substantial populations of brown bears. It is critical that you know how to behave around bears. See page 13 for more bear safety information.

Visitors to Brooks Camp are required, upon arrival, to participate in a brief, mandatory “Bear Etiquette” talk at the Brooks Camp Visitor Center.

Food Storage

All food, beverages, garbage, equipment used to cook or store food, and/or any odorous item must be properly stored in an approved bear-resistant container (BRC). BRCs include those approved by the Department of Interior and Agriculture’s Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (www.igbconline.org/images/pdf/Certified_Products_list.pdf) and additional items listed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=livingwithbears.bearcontainers). Public food caches are available at Brooks Camp.

Camping

Within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls (i.e., the Brooks Camp Developed Area), camping is only allowed at Brooks Camp Campground. Camping is permitted elsewhere in Katmai with one exception (see page 18) and on any public lands within Aniakchak and Alagnak.

Hunting

Sport hunting is permitted in the *preserve areas only* of Katmai National Park and Preserve and Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve. *Only non-guided* sport hunting is allowed in the Alagnak Wild River corridor. In all other areas, sport hunting is prohibited. All hunting activities require a license and are subject to National Park Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulations and restrictions.

Weather

Even during summer, visitors to the Alaska Peninsula should be prepared for cool and stormy conditions with frequent strong winds. Clear skies occur about 20 percent of days. In general, visitors to the Aniakchak area should expect significantly cooler, stormier, and windier conditions. Wherever you travel, remain aware of the dangers and treatments for hypothermia and be equipped with appropriate clothing and shelter.

Pets

Pets are not allowed within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls (i.e., the Brooks Camp Developed Area). In other areas, pets must be kept on a leash at all times.

Weather Information for King Salmon, Alaska

Month	Average High	Average Low	Average Precip.
January	22.8°F (-5.1°C)	8.0°F (-13.3°C)	1.03" (26.2 mm)
February	23.8°F (-4.6°C)	7.4°F (-13.7°C)	.72" (18.3 mm)
March	32.0°F (0°C)	15.1°F (-9.4°C)	.79" (20.1 mm)
April	41.3°F (5.2°C)	24.9°F (-3.9°C)	.94" (22.9 mm)
May	52.1°F (11.2°C)	34.8°F (1.6°C)	1.35" (34.3 mm)
June	59.5°F (15.3°C)	42.2°F (5.7°C)	1.70" (43.2 mm)
July	63.8°F (17.7°C)	47.5°F (8.6°C)	2.15" (54.6 mm)
August	62.2°F (16.8°C)	47.4°F (8.6°C)	2.89" (73.4 mm)
September	54.9°F (12.7°C)	40.3°F (4.6°C)	2.81" (71.4 mm)
October	40.5°F (4.7°C)	26.0°F (-3.3°C)	2.10" (53.3 mm)
November	30.5°F (-0.8°C)	15.9°F (-8.9°C)	1.54" (39.1 mm)
December	25.1°F (-3.8°C)	9.3°F (-12.6°C)	1.39" (35.3 mm)

Quick Tips for Visiting Three of the Most Remote National Park Units

MANY PEOPLE CONSIDER SOUTHWEST Alaska's remoteness to be an attractive characteristic, but the remote nature of the area necessitates careful planning in order to overcome certain logistical and accessibility challenges. Unlike most national parks in the United States, Alagnak, Aniakchak, and Katmai are almost exclusively accessed by plane or boat. Much of this area is rarely visited and opportunities for incredible wilderness experiences abound. Other areas, such as Brooks Camp, are more easily accessed and have amenities like lodging and hot meals.

The National Park Service headquarters for Alagnak, Aniakchak, and Katmai is located about 290 miles southwest of Anchorage in King Salmon. Regularly scheduled commercial flights to King Salmon (AKN) are available from Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC) via Peninsula Airlines and Alaska Airlines.

These parklands are open year-round for the adventurous. Numerous companies—over 115 in and around Alagnak,

Aniakchak, and Katmai—provide a variety of commercial visitor services, including transportation, guided day trips, guided multi-day trips, overnight accommodations and food services. Commercial partners are authorized by permit to operate in the parks. A complete list of services is available at go.nps.gov/1i7ykf.



Katmai National Park and Preserve and Alagnak Wild River

Katmai is located on the Alaska Peninsula, west of the Shelikof Strait and Afognak and Kodiak islands. The Alagnak River is located on the Alaska Peninsula about 260 miles southwest of Anchorage. Most destinations in the Katmai region, including Brooks Camp and Alagnak River, may be directly accessed via air taxi flights originating from Anchorage, Dillingham, Homer, Iliamna, King Salmon, Kodiak, Soldotna, and other nearby towns and villages.

Boats can access Katmai from villages and towns along the Pacific Ocean coastline.

Brooks Camp and other locations along the Naknek River drainage can be reached by both motorized and non-motorized boats from Naknek and King Salmon, located west of the Katmai. Boats can access the Alagnak River from towns and villages along Bristol Bay and the Kvichak River.

Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve

Aniakchak is one of the least visited and remote of all national park areas in the United States. It is located on the Alaska Peninsula about 450 miles southwest of Anchorage and 150 miles southwest of King Salmon.

Most people access Aniakchak via chartered airplanes departing from King Salmon and other nearby towns and villages. Boats can also reach the Pacific coast of the monument and preserve. A few adventurous groups have also hiked into the Aniakchak Caldera via a cross-country route from Port Heiden.



Welcome To Brooks Camp



NPS/K. MOCNIK

Brooks Camp is renowned for its remarkable bear viewing opportunities. For more information about bear viewing at Brooks Camp, see page 10.

The Bear Essentials:

Brooks Camp attracts people from all over the world to fish for trout and salmon, to view brown bears, explore the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, and to learn about the long human history of the area.

Brooks Camp is situated at the mouth of the Brooks River, along the shore of Naknek Lake

(the largest lake within any national park in the United States). From June 1 to September 17, the National Park Service operates a visitor center, ranger station, campground, and auditorium. Several ranger-led programs are led each day (see page 7 for more information)

Brooks Lodge



Lodging, meals, and many other services at Brooks Camp are provided by Katmailand.

For more information on Katmailand's sport fishing, bear viewing, air services, and lodging opportunities go to www.katmailand.com or call 1-800-544-0551.

Please Remember...

Upon Your Arrival

Visitors to Brooks Camp are required to begin their stay by checking-in at the visitor center for a brief "Bear Etiquette" talk outlining park regulations. Special regulations designed to keep bears and people safe apply to Brooks Camp.

Food Storage

Do not carry food, beverages, or any other odorous items around Brooks Camp. All food and drink, except water, must be stored inside of a building or designated food cache. Eat and drink only in buildings or designated picnic areas. Only water can be consumed outside of designated picnic areas.

Gear and Equipment Storage

All gear and equipment must be properly stored inside of a building. Gear or equipment cannot be left unattended at any time. Caches for gear are located at the Brooks Camp Visitor Center, Lake Brooks, and in the campground.

Accessibility

While most trails around Brooks Camp and the trail to Brooks Falls are wheelchair accessible,

they are unpaved and frequently muddy. The walk to Brooks Falls can be arduous for some people with limited mobility.

Pets

Pets are not allowed within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls (i.e., the Brooks Camp Developed Area).

See Please Remember on page 7...



Bear Jam!

Bear activity may delay crossing the bridge over Brooks River. Please be prepared to wait in windy and/or rainy conditions and allow yourself ample time to meet meal services and/or your departing flight.

Please Remember from page 6...

Camping

Within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls (i.e., the Brooks Camp Developed Area), camping is allowed only in the Brooks Camp Campground. Consult pages 8-9 for more information.

Bear Viewing

Three viewing platforms are ideally situated to provide exceptional opportunities for observing bears. The Lower River Platform is located at the mouth of Brooks River. Two additional platforms, Falls and Riffles, are located at Brooks Falls. See pages 10-11 for more information.

Visitor Center

From June 1 through September 17, a ranger is on duty to provide information, campground check-in, and backcountry planning. A bookstore (see page 26) is also available offering books, maps, and other Katmai-related items.

Hiking

A variety of hiking opportunities are available at Brooks Camp. Check out the brochure on hiking at Brooks Camp: go.nps.gov/brookscamphiking.

Ranger-Led Programs:

Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes Tour

A park ranger leads this scenic bus ride through some of Katmai's spectacular backcountry. After lunch at The Robert F. Griggs Visitor Center overlooking the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, you can take the optional, ranger-led hike into the valley. The hike is three miles (4.8 km) round-trip, with 800 feet (244 m) of elevation change. Sturdy boots, water, rain gear and warm clothes are recommended. Total trip time is 7-8 hours. Inquire at Brooks Lodge for reservations, or contact Katmailand, Inc. at 1-800-544-0551 or www.katmailand.com.

Evening Slide Show Programs

Join a park ranger for an illustrated program offering information and unique perspectives on Katmai's special features, history, and wildlife. Inquire at the visitor center for times and topics. The program lasts 45 minutes.

Cultural History Walk

A park ranger-naturalist leads this short .25 mile (0.4 km) walk about the human history of Brooks River Archeological District and National Historic Landmark, including archeological studies and traditional Alaska Native uses of plants and animals. The walk lasts about an hour and leads to a reconstructed traditional Native dwelling (see photo below).



Creature Comforts: Braving Alaska's Infamous Insects

RAIN, COLD WINDS, AND THE unrelenting onslaught of biting insects. Enjoying the beauty of Alaska does indeed come at a price.

While photographers are busy lining up the perfect shot at Brooks Falls, black flies and mosquitoes may be working at an equally frantic pace to find the perfect shot into the photographers' skin. It is not uncommon to leave Brooks Camp with new belts and anklets of swollen, itchy insect bites—painful souvenirs of happy times in the great outdoors.

These parasitic invertebrates can inspire horror stories, so what do you need to know in order to survive with your skin intact? For starters, don't plan on being attacked by mosquitoes alone. As the saying goes, to everything there is a season. The same goes for Alaska's resident invertebrates.

At Katmai, mosquitos and black flies are typically most abundant in late spring and early summer. No-see-ums (very small biting midges) peak in August. Population sizes do vary each year depending on weather conditions and temperatures, so no-see-ums could reign supreme one year and seem nonexistent the next. Furthermore, everyone reacts differently to insect bites and thus there are differing opinions on which insect is peskiest.

One of the most despised insects around Brooks Camp, however, is the white sock. White socks are a species of small biting black fly, nicknamed for characteristic white stripes on their legs. White sock swarms can be brutal and persistent in seeking out flesh, working their way under clothing until they are successful.

Female flies actually rasp into the skin of their hosts, unlike mosquitoes that merely See Comforts on page 16...



Biting insects like mosquitoes and black flies are ubiquitous and, for some people, the most baneful organisms in Katmai. Expect to encounter them during your visit.

Brooks Camp Campground: A Unique Setting

The only developed campground in Katmai National Park and Preserve is located at Brooks Camp.

With its wildlife viewing opportunities, access to Naknek Lake, and stunning views of nearby mountains, the Brooks Camp Campground is considered by many to be one of the top campgrounds in North America.

Because of the high numbers of bears in the Brooks Camp area, the campground is specially managed to minimize human–bear conflicts. Campers must take special precautions to reduce odors from food, garbage, and anything else that could appeal to a bear’s strong sense of smell.

Campground reservations are required and must be made in advance. The campground has a limit of 60 people. See page 9 for more information.

Campfires

Campfires are allowed in the three designated fire rings near each cooking shelter. Only dead and downed wood may be collected for firewood. Please do not cook over open fires.



In the campground, three cooking and eating shelters as well as food and gear caches are provided.

Cooking

All cooking and eating must take place within one of the three shared cooking shelters. (As a safety precaution, campers arriving by air with portable camp stoves should bring empty fuel bottles and purchase fuel at the Brooks Lodge Trading Post.) Wash dishes and cooking utensils at the water spigot near the food storage cache.

Food and Gear Storage

All food, refuse, and any other odorous items (e.g., toothpaste, deodorant, etc.) must be stored in the centrally located food cache which also contains a trash receptacle. In order



to prevent curious bears from investigating, please store any unused equipment in the gear storage cache adjacent to the food cache. A fireproof locker is available for storage of all flammable materials, such as stove fuel.

Electrified Fence

Brooks Camp Campground is enclosed within an electric fence designed to deter bears from entering. The fence is not bear proof, although once “shocked,” bears tend to avoid any subsequent contact with such fences.

How Far is the Walk to...

	Visitor Center	Brooks Camp Campground	Brooks River “The Corner”	Cultural Site	Lower River Platform	Falls Trail Outhouse	Falls Platform	Lake Brooks
Visitor Center	0	.3 mi (.5 km)	.2 mi (.3 km)	.1 mi (.2 km)	.3 mi (.5 km)	.6 mi (1 km)	1.2 mi (1.9 km)	1.2 mi (1.9 km)
Brooks Camp Campground	.3 mi (.5 km)	0	.4 mi (.6 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	.6 mi (1 km)	.9 mi (1.4 km)	1.4 mi (2.3 km)	1.5 mi (2.4 km)
Brooks River “The Corner”	.2 mi (.3 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	0	.3 mi (.5 km)	.1 mi (.2 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	.8 mi (1.3 km)	1.1 mi (1.8 km)
Cultural Site	.1 mi (.2 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	.3 mi (.5 km)	0	.4 mi (.6 km)	.7 mi (1.1 km)	1.3 mi (2.1 km)	1.4 mi (2.3 km)
Lower River Platform	.3 mi (.5 km)	.6 mi (1 km)	.1 mi (.2 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	0	.3 mi (.5 km)	.9 mi (1.4 km)	1 mi (1.6 km)
Falls Trail Outhouse	.6 mi (1 km)	.9 mi (1.4 km)	.4 mi (.6 km)	.7 mi (1.1 km)	.3 mi (.5 km)	0	.6 mi (1 km)	.7 mi (1.1 km)
Falls Platform	1.2 mi (1.9 km)	1.4 mi (2.3 km)	.8 mi (1.3 km)	1.3 mi (2.1 km)	.9 mi (1.4 km)	.6 mi (1 km)	0	1.3 mi (2.1 km)
Lake Brooks	1.2 mi (1.9 km)	1.5 mi (2.4 km)	1.1 mi (1.8 km)	1.4 mi (2.3 km)	1 mi (1.6 km)	.7 mi (1.1 km)	1.3 mi (2.1 km)	0

Campground Reservations

Brooks Camp Campground is open June 1–September 17. Reservations are required and may be made beginning January 5 each year. Telephone and internet access are not available at Brooks Camp, so campground reservations must be made prior to your arrival.

During the month of July, campsites may be reserved for a maximum of seven nights, cumulatively. Campers arriving without a reservation, especially during July when the campground is usually full, must be prepared to backcountry

camp outside of the Brooks Camp Developed Area (defined as the area within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls).

To make reservations and pay the \$12.00 per person/per night campground fee, please visit www.recreation.gov, scan the QR code at right, or call 877-444-6777 (from the United States), 518-885-3639 (international).



Brooks Camp Campground is surrounded by an electric fence. It is bear-resistant, but not bear-proof. Campers must follow special regulations so that bears are not tempted to enter the campground.

Brooks Camp Area Map



Bear Viewing at Brooks Camp

Bears Galore

BROOKS CAMP IS WORLD FAMOUS for its bear viewing opportunities. It is one of the most accessible and popular bear watching sites in Katmai National Park. Watching bears at Brooks Camp is an unforgettable experience, but timing your trip properly is critical because the overall number of bears as well as their general behavior varies with the seasons.

When can bears be seen at Brooks Camp?

Bear viewing at Brooks Camp is best in July and September. At other times of the year, like June and August, less food is available along the Brooks River so bears aren't seen as frequently.

Springtime is a lean season for bears who live in the interior of Katmai National Park. Little food is typically available to bears in the spring so bears are dispersed throughout the area and are only infrequently seen at Brooks Camp in May and June.

When the salmon begin to arrive in late June, bears migrate to the Brooks River. Bears can be seen fishing at Brooks Falls and in the lower Brooks River throughout the month of July. Mid-July is typically when the largest number of bears can be seen along the river. In late July, bears begin to disperse to feed in other areas.

In August, salmon are beginning to spawn in the Brooks River, but they are less concentrated, remain energetic, and are no longer migrating. This creates difficult fishing conditions for bears and almost all of the bears will leave the area. Like June, there are typically days in August when no bears are seen at Brooks Camp.

By late August, many salmon have already spawned and will begin to die. As the fish weaken and die, bears will again migrate to the Brooks River to feed. In September, bears are usually present in high numbers as they search for dead and dying salmon. The behavior and appearance of the bears

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Few places in the world can rival the bear viewing opportunities along the Brooks River.

also varies with the season. In July, more aggressive interactions between bears are observed, especially at the beginning of the month. Bears are also thinner and many will shed their fur at this time. In September, bears at Brooks Camp are typically less aggressive towards each other. In contrast to early summer, bears in September and later in the fall are usually fat and covered with a new coat of fur.

Where can bears be seen at Brooks Camp?

The brown bears of Katmai are eating machines. A Katmai bear must eat a full year's worth of food in 6-8 months to ensure its survival. Katmai's bears predictably congregate around rich and concentrated sources of food. At Brooks Camp this means salmon.

During the peak of the salmon migration in July, bears will fish for salmon all along the Brooks River, but bears will be especially concentrated at Brooks Falls. The falls creates a temporary barrier to migrating salmon which gives some bears the opportunity to catch many fish with little effort. Typically, the largest and most dominant bears along the river fish at Brooks Falls.

In July, many of the bears that cannot compete for fishing spots at Brooks Falls will fish the lower half of the Brooks River. At this time of the year, females with cubs are usually easiest to see near the mouth of the Brooks River.

After the salmon begin to spawn and die in late summer, bear activity is concentrated in the lower half of the Brooks River. In some years a few bears may still fish at Brooks Falls and the upper Brooks River in September and October, but most will patrol the slower moving waters of the lower Brooks River as they search for dead and dying salmon that collect in the slow moving currents and eddies near the river mouth and bridge.

Three wildlife viewing platforms can be found along the river--one at Brooks Falls, one downstream of the falls, and one at the mouth of Brooks River. Each one can offer unique bear watching experiences in season.

See Bear Viewing on page 11...

Bear Viewing from page 10...

Other Considerations

Brooks Camp is a unique place with special regulations designed to protect bears and people. Everyone who arrives at Brooks Camp is required to begin their stay by checking in at the Brooks Camp Visitor Center for a brief “Bear Etiquette” talk outlining park regulations and proper behavior at Brooks Camp.

Be sure to dress and pack in anticipation of diverse and changing weather conditions. Whether staying for just a few hours or for several days, you should expect to encounter windy, cool, and wet weather as well as biting insects like mosquitos and black flies.

Weather and bear encounters can sometimes delay the arrival and departure of float planes, so it is usually best to incorporate some extra time into your itinerary in case of any delays.












































The floating bridge across Brooks River can temporarily close because of bear activity. To minimize the chance of missing an outgoing flight or a meal at Brooks Lodge, give yourself some extra time to cross the bridge in July and September.

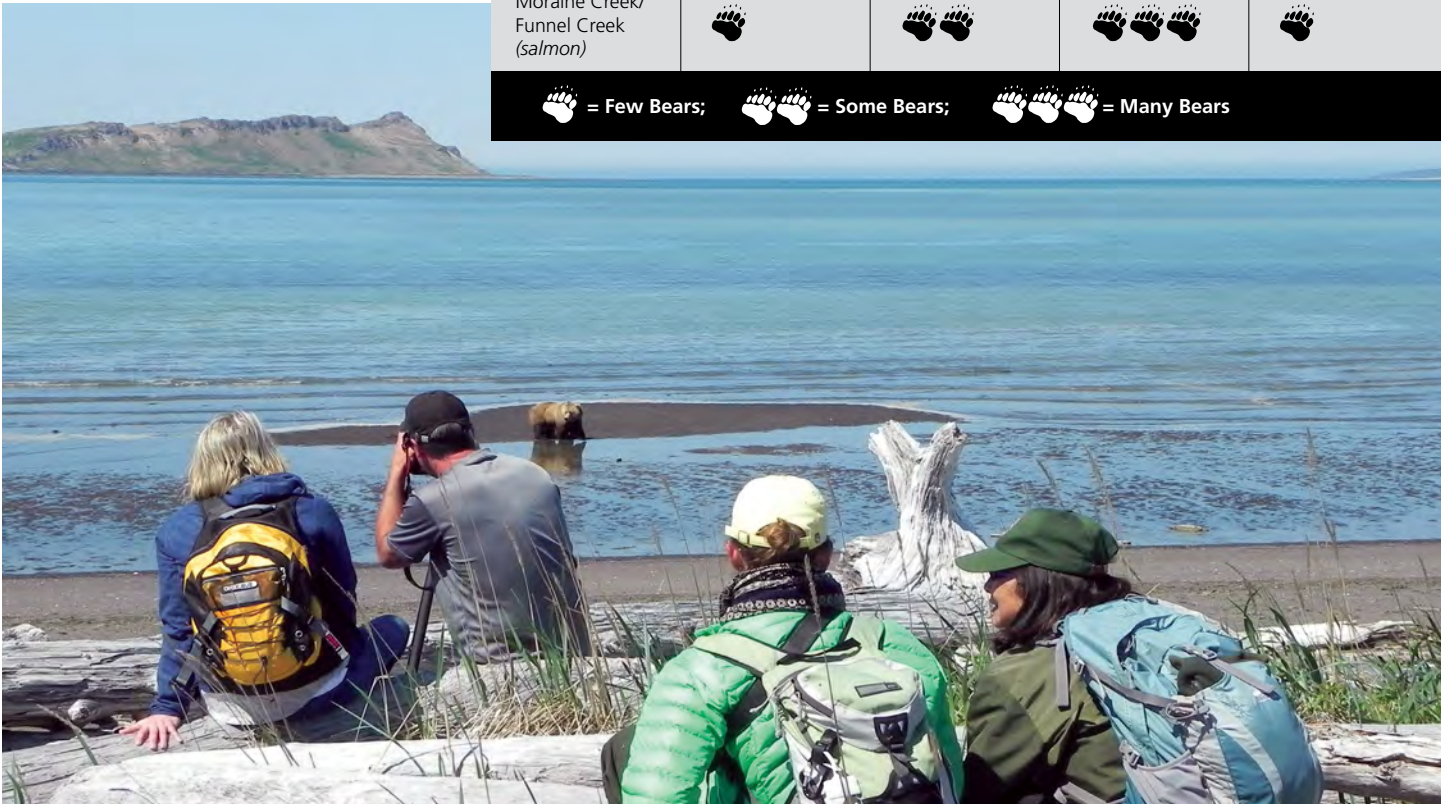
More people visit Brooks Camp in July than any other month. If you come at this time, expect crowded conditions at the Brooks Falls Platform.

Other Bear Viewing Opportunities in Katmai

A bear’s waking hours are often dominated by their search for food. Outside of their denning season, bears predictably congregate in food rich areas throughout the Katmai region. Some areas of Katmai National Park, like the food rich Pacific coast, support some of the highest densities of bears ever documented. Other areas of the park with little food, such as the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, support only a few bears in any season.

If you know what foods bears prefer to eat and when that food is most abundant, accessible, and nutritious, then you will be able to find many areas in Katmai to observe these fascinating animals. Many guided trips to observe bears in Katmai’s backcountry are available. See page 5 for information on commercial services.

Where the Wild Things Are: A Bear Viewing Calendar for Katmai National Park and Preserve				
Location <i>(primary food)</i>	June	July	August	September
Brooks Camp <i>(salmon)</i>		  		  
Hallo Bay <i>(vegetation, clams)</i>	  	 	 	 
Geographic Harbor <i>(salmon)</i>			  	 
Swikshak Lagoon <i>(vegetation)</i>	  			
Moraine Creek/ Funnel Creek <i>(salmon)</i>		 	  	
 = Few Bears;   = Some Bears;    = Many Bears				



Bears on the Web and in Print

Bear Cams! Live Streaming Video of the Brooks River Bears

If you don't have an opportunity to visit Brooks Camp this summer or you want to see more of Katmai's bears, don't fret. Katmai National Park has partnered with explore.org so you can follow their lives anywhere with an internet connection.

Go to go.nps.gov/bearcam and follow the links to watch the Brooks River webcams. Cameras at Brooks Falls, Riffles, Lower River, Dumpling Mountain, and even underwater provide great opportunities to watch the dynamic world of brown bears. Park rangers will be periodically available to answer your questions about the bears through blog posts, live tweets, live programs, and forum discussions.



bears: brooks falls - brown bear & salmon cam



related media: LIVE CAMS ▾ FILMS ▸ PHOTOS ▸

COMMENT    

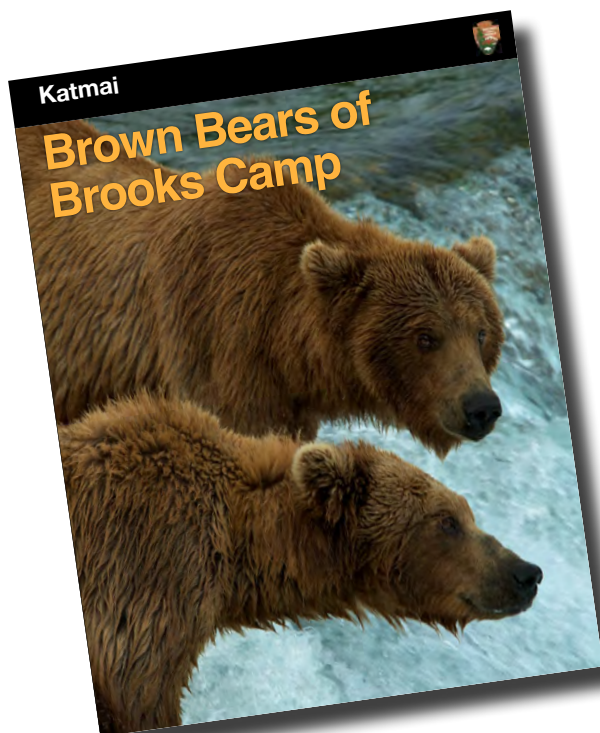
Books about the Brooks River Bears Now Available

Every bear that uses the Brooks River has a story to tell. Since the late 1980s, biologists have closely monitored the habits and behaviors of the bears that frequent the Brooks River. This information provides a unique opportunity to gain insight into the

stories that illustrate the dynamics of bears' lives.

What stories can they tell you? Find out by downloading *Brown Bears of Brooks Camp* on iTunes (requires iBooks 2.0 software for

the iPad), and *Brown Bears of Brooks River* for free on Katmai's website, go.nps.gov/bearcam.



You are in Brown Bear Country

Be Prepared For Bear Encounters Anywhere You Go

KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND Preserve and the surrounding lands in southwest Alaska support some of the highest densities of bears on earth. It is critical that you know how to behave around bears. When people behave in a consistent manner around bears, then bears may learn to behave in a consistent manner around us. Use the following information as a basic guideline only. Learn as much about bears as you can. They are fascinating animals that add excitement and risk to any visit. You need not fear bears, but you do need to respect them.

Avoid Surprise Encounters

Take the appropriate steps to avoid surprising bears. Make noise where visibility is limited to warn a bear of your approach. The human voice is usually the best way to warn bears of your approach. Bells are typically not loud enough. If you see a bear that is unaware of you and/or far away, back away slowly and quietly while observing the bear's behavior.

Avoid Food Sources That Attract Bears

Bears can be especially protective of concentrated food sources like salmon and animal carcasses, so be especially cautious in areas where bears are likely to gather and feed. Stay far away from animal carcasses. Bears often defend these aggressively.

Hike and travel in Groups

Groups of people, especially groups of 4 or more, are typically very safe in bear country. Groups of people are generally noisier allowing bears to hear your approach more easily. During surprise encounters, bears may be intimidated by a group's large size. Hiking and traveling in groups is one the best ways to increase your level of safety in bear country.



Don't Get Too Close
for Comfort!

Do Not Approach

The minimum distance from any bear is 50 yards (46 m), or as otherwise directed by National Park Service personnel. Avoid actions that interfere with bear movement, behavior, or foraging activities. Please check with a park ranger if you're unsure about a situation. In general, the greater the distance you keep between yourself and a bear, the safer you can be.

Remain Calm

A bear may approach closely or rear up on its hind legs to identify you. Back away slowly,

moving out of its line of travel if necessary. You may need to leave a trail temporarily to allow a bear to pass. If a bear follows you, stop and hold your ground. If a bear continues to approach, make noise, wave your arms, and try to appear as large as possible.

Don't Run

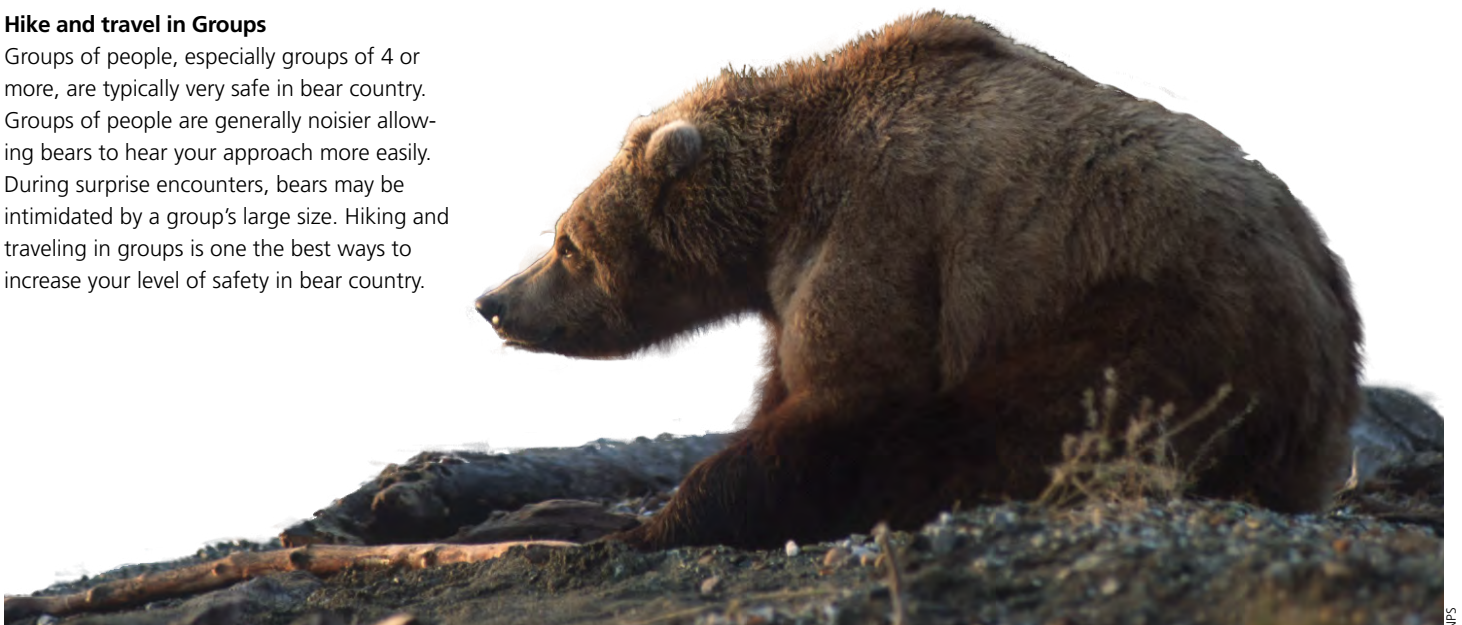
Running may encourage a bear to pursue you. Bears can run faster than 30 mph (50 km/hr). You cannot outrun them. If you are charged, try to appear non-threatening. Stand your ground and speak to the bear in a calm voice. Bears sometimes come within a few feet of people before veering off.

If A Bear Makes Contact, Play Dead

Fall to the ground on your stomach with your legs apart. Lock your hands behind your neck to protect your neck and face. If you do get rolled over, keep rolling until you're face down again. Stay quietly in this position until the bear has left the area. If the attack continues long after you have assumed the protective position, fight back vigorously.

Regulations

Special regulations designed to keep bears and people safe apply to Brooks Camp and when backcountry camping. See pages 6 and 18 for more information.



The Great Novarupta-Katmai Eruption of 1912: 100 Years Later



Several hundred feet of ash filled the upper reaches of the Ukak River valley to create the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. The Valley still excites scientific interest and invites exploration.

An Extraordinary Event

WHILE VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS ARE common in Alaska, only one eruption in the past several hundred years was large enough to attract worldwide attention.

On June 6th, 1912, a new volcanic vent exploded in a remote valley on the northern Alaska Peninsula. For the next 60 hours, a volcano named Novarupta ejected 4 mi^3 (17 km^3) of ash that fell from the sky and 2.6 mi^3 (11 km^3) of pyroclastic flows and surges that buried the Ukak River valley. The ash flows created a unique landscape

early explorers dubbed the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes (aka the Valley). A towering volcano nearby, Mount Katmai, collapsed during the eruption forming a 2000 feet (600 m) deep caldera.

In total, the ash and pumice released during the eruption represents over 3 mi^3 (13.5 km^3) of magma beneath the earth, 30 times more magma than what was released during the 1980 eruption of Mount Saint Helens.

The 1912 Novarupta-Katmai eruption was the largest of the 20th century and one of the five largest in recorded history. Its effects were nearly catastrophic for wildlife and people in the region, but it also created a landscape unique enough to be protected as a national monument.

Today, the Valley is the centerpiece of Katmai National Park. This is a place where volcanic processes still dominate and we are reminded of the earth's awesome ability to alter land and life.

Ash covered mountains and towering volcanoes dominate the horizons surrounding the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.





M. FITZ

The panoramic view from the Robert F. Griggs Visitor Center is not to be missed. Daily bus tours from Brooks Camp to this location depart at 9 AM. See page 7 for more info.

The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes: Then and Now

"The sight that flashed into view...was one of the most amazing visions ever beheld by mortal eye. The whole valley as far as the eye could reach was full of hundreds, no thousands--literally tens of thousands--of smokes curling up from its fissured floor.

"Our feeling of admiration [for the Valley] soon gave way to one of stupefaction. We were overawed. For a while we could neither think nor act in a normal fashion."

Robert F. Griggs upon discovering the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes

Robert F. Griggs was understandably awed when he first gazed into the former Ukak River valley in 1916. The volcanic eruption in 1912 transformed a remote, glacially carved valley into what Griggs dubbed

"The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes," a place where thousands of fumaroles (volcanic steam and gas vents) shot into the sky.

The 1912 eruption's pyroclastic flows and surges filled the Valley with thick deposits of hot ash and pumice. Snow fields and glacial streams were buried and flashed into steam as well as any subsequent rain that seeped into the pumice fields.

Griggs and his team thought of the fumaroles as permanent features tied to a shallow magma chamber. They would in time, Griggs thought, rival the geysers of Yellowstone National Park, but by the 1930s most of the fumaroles had died.

Today the Valley is still a unique and beautiful landscape. The acid and heat from the fumaroles baked and stained the ash and pumice creating kaleidoscopes of color. Wind storms occasionally blow pumice through the air with enough force to abrade surrounding rocks. Cryptobiotic crusts struggle to survive against the workings of wind and pumice. Several active volcanoes dominate the surrounding horizons.

Some of the grand scenery Griggs explored was lost when the fumaroles faded away, but the Valley remains a surreal place to explore, and perhaps still become overawed.

The Valley's beauty is still impressive, especially at its southern extent.

Left: The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes near Novarupta in 1919. Right: Near the same location in 2010.



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



NPS/M. FITZ

Nature Photography: Photographing and Protecting A Wild Heritage



You are encouraged to enjoy Katmai's wildlife, but please do it with respect and care. National parks are symbols of our wild heritage. The forethought of past generations has given us the special places we enjoy today. Help protect and preserve the natural wonders of Katmai, Aniakchak, and the Alagnak for the future by maintaining standards of ethical photography—it's up to each of us.

The North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) encourages adherence to the following Principles of Ethical Field Practices:

Environment: Knowledge of Subject and Place

Learn patterns of animal behaviors so as not to interfere with animal life cycles.

Do not distress wildlife or their habitat. Respect the routine needs of animals.

Use appropriate lenses to photograph wild animals. If an animal shows stress, move back and use a longer lens.

Acquaint yourself with the fragility of the ecosystem. Stay on trails that are intended to lessen impact.

Social: Knowledge of Rules and Laws

When appropriate, inform managers or other authorities of your presence and purpose. Help

Comforts continued from page 7...

pierce the skin with their needle-like proboscis. White sock bites can be identified by a characteristic red incision mark in the middle of the swollen bite area. Other tell-tale signs include blood stains left behind on the insides of T-shirts after a stealthy attack.

Later, the bite area can become swollen, somewhat painful, and intensely itchy. Relief from biting insects usually arrives on days when the weather is windy, rainy, and just generally dismal. Fortunately, skies around Brooks Camp are clear for only 20

16 The Novarupta

minimize cumulative impacts and maintain safety.

Learn the rules and laws of the location. If minimum distances exist for approaching wildlife, follow them.

In the absence of management authority, use good judgment. Treat the wildlife, plants and places as if you were their guest.

Prepare yourself and your equipment for unexpected events. Avoid exposing yourself and others to preventable mishaps.

Individual: Expertise and Responsibility

Ask before joining others already shooting in an area.

Tactfully inform others if you observe them in engaging in inappropriate or harmful behavior. Many people unknowingly endanger themselves and animals. Treat others courteously.

Report inappropriate behavior to proper authorities. Don't argue with those who don't care; report them.

Be a good role model, both as a photographer and a citizen. Educate others by your actions; enhance their understanding.

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If people behave consistently, then animals may learn to behave consistently around people. Your potential impact on animals can be minimized by photographing from predictable places like the wildlife viewing platforms at Brooks Camp.

percent of the summer. The best defense against the insect mobs is to cover up. Many people report that insect repellent containing DEET is not always effective. Therefore, it is wise to invest in a good head net, wear long sleeved shirts, and be prepared to tuck your pant legs into your socks on particularly buggy days.

It may be difficult to see any value in the Class Insecta after being harassed by a cloud of black flies or mosquitoes, but consider the indispensable role these insects play in the ecosystem. Male mosquitos and black flies are pollinators. They all

serve as food sources for other animals. Furthermore, they respond more quickly to environmental changes than vertebrates do, which can help provide early detection of ecological changes.

Regardless of their ecological importance, the insects of Katmai provide visitors with something else: stories to take back home—battle scars, even—to remind us that the beauty of Alaska can't be won without persevering through hardships, however large, or small, they may be.

Going Fishing?

A VISIT TO ALAGNAK AND KATMAI offers tremendous fishing opportunities for rainbow trout, arctic char, grayling, and salmon. Katmai's run of sockeye salmon, in particular, also attracts one of the greatest gatherings of brown bears on earth. No matter when you or where you choose to fish, extra care and responsibility are necessary to protect people, wildlife, and the experience.

Fishing Around Bears

A splashing fish sounds like food to a bear. Bears will often move in your direction to investigate a fish on a line. Always be prepared to cut or break your line, so that you can free the fish and move out of the water until the bear passes. Never let a bear acquire a fish from you.

It is easy to become so engaged in fishing, that you forget to be alert for bears. They are surprisingly quiet and difficult to see in dense grass or tall brush, so always have someone spot bears for you. At minimum, keep 50 yards between yourself and all bears. Stop fishing and move away well before a bear approaches within 50 yards, or you may find yourself in a situation with a fish on the line and a bear in pursuit.

When bear activity is at its peak along a salmon stream, both bears and anglers compete for the same resources. Expect to spend more time out of the water than in, and be prepared to give up your fishing hole to a bear at some time during your trip. It is critical that bears do not learn to associate anglers with fish.

Catch & Release Ethics

Many areas in the Katmai region, like Brooks River, see heavy fishing pressure each year. Many fish are caught multiple times in a season. Therefore, it is vital that anglers release fish as quickly and gently as possible to ensure their continued survival.

In general, avoid playing a fish to exhaustion. As a fish is landed, keep it in the water when removing the hook. Fish can quickly suffocate when removed from the water. Use barbless hooks as much as possible. They are easier to remove and less injurious to fish.

The slime on fish helps to protect it from disease and parasites. Handling a fish roughly, with dry hands, or dragging it onto the shore removes this slime and reduces its chances for survival.

A short video, *Letting Go: The Art of Catch and Release*, is available to watch on demand in the Brooks Camp Visitor Center and online. This video, written and produced by experienced local fishing guides, succinctly highlights proper catch and release techniques.

Regulations

Fishing in Katmai, Aniakchak, and the Alagnak is subject to Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regulations and restrictions. Additional federal regulations apply to the Brooks River. Alaska state fishing licenses are required.

For more fishing information, ask a park ranger or visit the ADF&G website at www.adfg.state.ak.us/.



Backcountry Travel in and Around Katmai



NPS/AM. FITZ

Hikers often find challenge, adventure, unique geology, and surreal beauty in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.

Logistics

Permits

While permits are not required for backcountry travel or camping, you are encouraged to submit a Backcountry Planner, available free-of-charge at the Brooks Camp and King Salmon visitor centers. In cases of emergency, these planners give park rangers a point of reference to begin a search and rescue.

Camping

With the exception of Brooks Camp Campground, no camping is permitted within 1.5 miles (2.4 km) of Brooks Falls. Elsewhere, Katmai National Park and Preserve offers nearly unlimited camping opportunities (see restrictions for Hallo Bay below).

Camping is allowed anywhere on public lands within Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve and Alagnak Wild River. Campsites must be relocated at least 2 miles (3.2 km) after 14 consecutive days in one location. When choosing a campsite, follow Leave No Trace guidelines to minimize your impact on the landscape.

Food, trash, and all odorous items must be carried and stored in a bear-resistant container (BRC). A limited supply of BRCs are available to

borrow at the Brooks Camp and King Salmon visitor centers. Hanging food is not encouraged as trees of appropriate height are not usually available.

Maps

Maps are available from the USGS Map Store (store.usgs.gov). The Brooks Camp and King Salmon visitor centers (see page 4) maintain a limited selection of topographic maps as well.

Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is a national and international program designed to assist outdoor enthusiasts with their decisions about how to reduce their impacts when they hike, camp, picnic, snowshoe, run, bike, hunt, paddle, ride horses, fish, ski or climb. The program strives to educate all those who enjoy the outdoors about the nature of their recreational impacts as well as techniques to prevent and minimize such impacts. Leave No Trace is best understood as an educational and ethical program, not as a set of rules and regulations.

Leave No Trace information is rooted in scientific studies and common sense. The message is framed under seven Leave No Trace Principles:



1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Others

This copyrighted LNT information has been reprinted with permission from the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. For more information, please visit www.lnt.org.



Attention Hallo Bay Campers:

To ensure bears' free access to prime feeding sites and to reduce the risk of bear/human conflicts, camping within the core Hallo Bay Meadows is closed from April 1st through October 31st annually. For more

information, see the Katmai National Park and Preserve Superintendent's Compendium at go.nps.gov/AK_compendiums.

Explore Katmai's Lakes Via the Savonoski Loop

Magnificent lakes, rivers, and mountains await exploration on the Savonoski Loop, an 80 mile (129 km) backcountry canoe or kayak trip. The trip generally takes four to ten days to complete, depending on weather conditions and paddlers' experience.

Most paddlers begin at Brooks Camp and head northwest, following the north arm of Naknek Lake to Bay of Islands. At historic Fure's Cabin, a 1.5 mile (2.4 km) portage leads to Lake Grosvenor. After reaching Lake Grosvenor, paddlers usually continue southeast on the lake to the Grosvenor and Savonoski rivers which swiftly carry boats to the Iliuk Arm of Naknek Lake and eventually back to Brooks Camp.

Bears are commonly seen along the Savonoski Loop. Strong winds and cold water can create dangerous conditions at any time. Paddlers should exercise caution to avoid these potential hazards and practice Leave No Trace skills used elsewhere. In July, many paddlers avoid camping along the Savonoski River, as it is particularly popular with bears fishing for salmon.

Equipment rentals, outfitters, and guides may be available locally. Contact the King Salmon Visitor Center at 907-246-4250 for more information.

Limited public use of Fure's Cabin in Bay of Islands is available by permit. Reservations and

permits are issued through Katmai National Park and Preserve's headquarters in King Salmon.



To read more about the Savonoski Loop, go to www.nps.gov/katm/plan-ourvisit/boating.htm or scan the QR code.



The 80 mile (129 km) Savonoski Loop.

River Crossings in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes

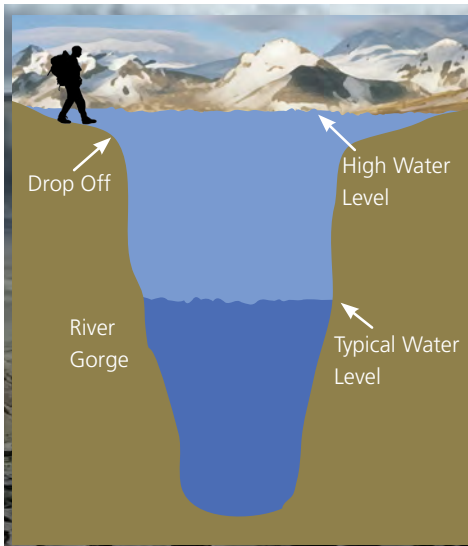
The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes poses special challenges for backcountry travelers. Suspended volcanic ash and glacially-derived sediments in river waters often make water depths impossible to estimate, and most of the rivers in the Valley are confined to narrow gorges that are deceptively deep and swift. Hikers must be especially cautious when choosing a place to cross the Valley's rivers and creeks. The River Lethe and Knife Creek, for example, can only be forded in a few places.

If you cannot find a safe crossing, then you should not attempt to cross. You may also need to wait a day or longer until lower water levels permit safe crossing. Follow these tips when crossing:

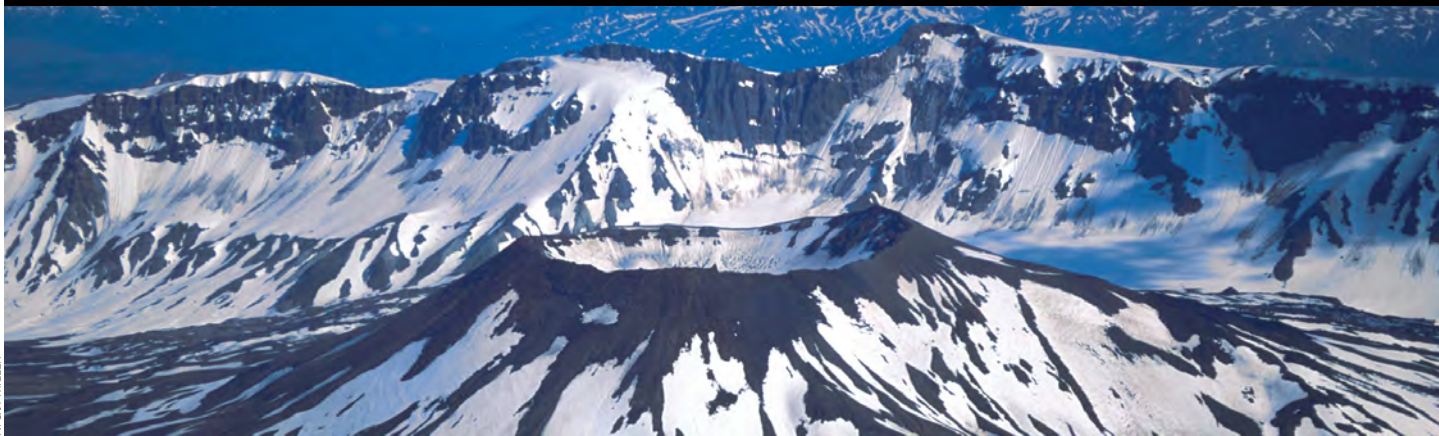
- Watch the water's surface and cross where you see small ripples, not waves.
- Cross early in the morning when runoff from glaciers is low.

- Release your pack's belt buckle and loosen shoulder straps so you can drop your pack easily.
- Wear shoes while crossing.
- Allow yourself a retreat. Don't commit to one route.
- Use a hiking pole or stick to help steady yourself and gauge the water's depth.

Below: Rivers and streams are typically shallower and easier to cross at their widest margin. In flood conditions, deep gorges can be hidden (see inset).



Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve



NPS/J. MILLER

Vent Mountain (middle foreground) in the Aniakchak Caldera is one of the more recent reminders of Aniakchak's active volcanism.

A Remote and Wonderful Land

ANIAKCHAK IS OUT THERE, REALLY out there. It lies 450 miles south of Anchorage on the roadless Alaska Peninsula. Because of its remote location and notoriously bad weather, Aniakchak is one of the least visited units of the national park system. However, the monument's extraordinary landscape make it a truly unique place to experience.

Aniakchak is a vibrant reminder of Alaska's location in the volcanically active "Ring of Fire." About 3,400 years ago, a 7,000 feet (2150 m) volcano collapsed during a massive eruption. A six-mile (10 km) wide,

2,500 feet (770 m) deep caldera was left in the eruption's wake. Subsequent eruptions have created cinder cones, lava flows, and explosion pits that dot the caldera floor. Aniakchak's most recent eruption occurred in early May, 1931. When you are in the caldera, you feel like you are inside of a volcano.

The caldera was once partly filled with a large lake, similar to Crater Lake in Oregon. Eventually, a weaker portion of the rim collapsed, and the resulting outflow cut through the rim of the caldera to create "The Gates" through which the Aniakchak

River now exits the caldera. At 2.5 miles long, Surprise Lake is all that remains of the once larger lake. Catastrophic change has repeatedly altered the face of the landscape, but that is only one of the many things to discover at Aniakchak.

Only a few dozen people per year visit making solitude easy to find. It is rich with wildlife and fish, and archeological excavations have revealed a substantial record of human history in the area. Of course, there is always the volcano. If you visit be prepared for the worst, but expect to experience the best of Alaska.

Ancestral Surprise Lake once stood as much as 500 feet (160 m) above the floor of Aniakchak Caldera. It was estimated to drain at the incredible rate of 8,238,000 feet³ (240,000 m³) per second. The lake disappeared within a few hours after water broke through The Gates on the caldera rim.



NPS/T. HAMON

Through “The Gates”: Rafting the Aniakchak Wild River

Congress designated the Aniakchak River a national wild river in 1980. Its spectacular resources make rafting the Aniakchak a rewarding experience. From Surprise Lake, the river flows a peaceful mile (1.6 km) to The Gates. The river moves swiftly through this narrow gorge in the caldera wall, and large rocks demand precise maneuvering. A gradient of 75 feet per mile (14.2 m/km) makes this section challenging. After a more gentle 10 miles (16.1 km) rafters arrive at the confluence with Hidden Creek, and the river is again filled with car-sized boulders, abrupt bends, and a narrow bed requiring extreme caution. After 5 more miles (8 km), the river slows to meander toward the Pacific Ocean and the seals, sea otters, bald eagles, and sea birds of Aniakchak Bay.

Are you contemplating the trip? The Aniakchak River presents a challenge to even the most experienced river runners. Only a few parties float the river each year, mostly in July. A commercial guidebook says: “The weather on Aniakchak is severe; life-threatening conditions can develop rapidly. Extremely violent winds in the caldera, particularly near ‘The Gates,’ can shred tents and prevent air rescue.”

A hefty budget and pre-tested skills are absolutely necessary. Dry suits are recommended; life jackets are required. Inflatable



Rafters must negotiate car-sized boulders in The Gates of the Aniakchak Wild River.

rafts 12–13 feet (4 m) long with rowing platforms are most popular. And, be sure to bring lots of repair materials! Limited supplies may be available in larger Bristol Bay communities.

Total float time: 3–4 days from Surprise Lake to the bay. Plan on delays getting in and, especially, getting out. The river is dynamic; conditions change rapidly in a very

short period of time. Contact the National Park Service in King Salmon for the latest information, but always be prepared for the unexpected!

Safety Concerns for Backcountry Travelers

Aniakchak, Alagnak, and Katmai’s backcountry provide access to millions of acres of wilderness and limitless possibilities for adventure and exploration.

With these opportunities come great responsibility to maintain the safety of your group, yourself, wildlife, and the land. Planning ahead will help ensure your safety and enjoyment and that of future visitors.

Weather

Weather in all areas of the Alaska Peninsula can be both sudden and severe. Be prepared for extreme conditions at all times of the year and have the wisdom to alter, delay, or abandon your travel plans if current conditions or the weather forecast appear ominous.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is the critical lowering of the body’s core temperature and is signaled by these symptoms: shivering, numbness, slurred speech, loss of coordination, drowsiness and exhaustion. Avoid hypothermia by eating plenty of high-calorie foods, drinking plenty of water, and staying dry. Layer clothing appropriately for your level of activity to minimize sweating.

Bears

This is bear country! All park lands on the Alaska Peninsula contain substantial populations of brown bears. It is critical that visitors know how to behave around bears. Avoid close encounters by remaining aware of your



surroundings at all times. Store food and garbage properly, and do not approach within 50 yards (46 m) of a bear (see page 13 for more info).

Alagnak Wild River



NPS / R. WOOD

The braided Alagnak Wild River is popular with rafters and anglers.

Meander After Meander After Meander...

THE ALAGNAK RIVER FLOWS THROUGH a wild land of captivating landscapes, abundant wildlife, and cultural heritage. Meandering down the braided river, you may discover a bald eagle perched atop a spruce tree in the boreal forest, gaze at a moose browsing above the river bank in the wet sedge tundra, or perhaps encounter a brown bear feasting upon spawning salmon.

For centuries people have lived along the Alagnak and depended on the rich natural resources for survival. Today, Alaska Natives from nearby villages own land along the river and still depend on the area for subsistence hunting and fishing. The Alagnak River's wildlife and Class I-III rapids offer an exciting trip for many boaters, and the abundant fish make the river the most popular destination for sport fishing in Southwest Alaska.

In order to protect the Alagnak's free-flowing characteristics, striking scenery, diverse wildlife, and cultural history, the upper 67 miles were designated a Wild River in 1980 by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act under the provisions of the 1968 National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Alagnak Wild River is part of the National



NPS

Alagnak Wild River is one of the most popular fishing destinations in all of southwest Alaska.

Wild and Scenic Rivers System. In Alaska, 3,210 miles of protected wild, scenic and recreational rivers have been designated. The National Park Service manages approximately 83 percent of the river within the Alagnak Wild River corridor; the remaining 17 percent of the lands within the corridor are privately owned by Alaska Natives. Please respect the rights and privileges of private land owners.

Please protect Alagnak Wild River by practicing Leave No Trace ethics

(see page 18 for more info). You are invited to discover the magnificent splendor of this riparian wilderness.



People and the Alagnak River

The Alagnak River has been a productive place to live for thousands of years—home to many people thriving on its bounty. An archeological survey conducted in 1997 revealed that people have lived along the river for the past 8,000 years.

Some early inhabitants lived in settlements with as few as 4 dwellings, while others resided in larger villages with as many as 69 houses. From more recent times, the remains of an early historic village provide evidence of a community whose members cached their food in the ground, attended a Russian Orthodox church, and buried their

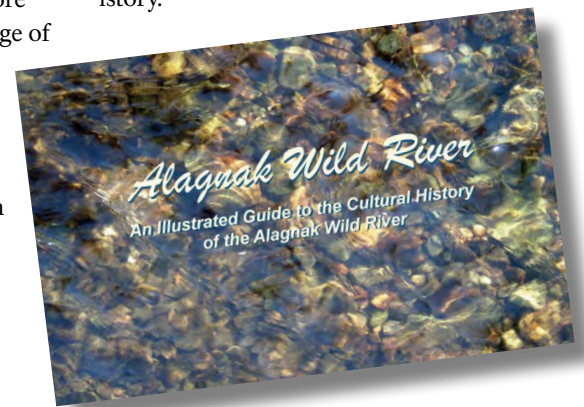
loved ones in a cemetery.

Alaska Natives continue to own land along the Alagnak River, practicing traditional subsistence activities. As you enjoy the river, remember those who came before and respect the special cultural heritage of the area.

Please do not disturb archeological sites, leave artifacts where you find them, and do not camp or trespass on private property.

To learn more about the people who live and have lived along the Alagnak,

ask for a free copy of the cultural history guide, or download it from here: <http://go.nps.gov/alagnakh-istory>.



A Subsistence Lifestyle

The meaning of Alagnak is “making mistakes” or “going the wrong way.” As Mrs. Gust, a resident of Levelock said, “The channel is always changing, causing mistakes and getting lost.” Younger local people call the Alagnak the Branch River because of the branching nature of the river. Alagnag’llug (which is diminutive for teasing cousins) and Locknuk are places people used to live along the Alagnak. The descendants have since moved to Kokhanok, Igiugig and Newhalen. Many people

still return to the area for subsistence purposes.

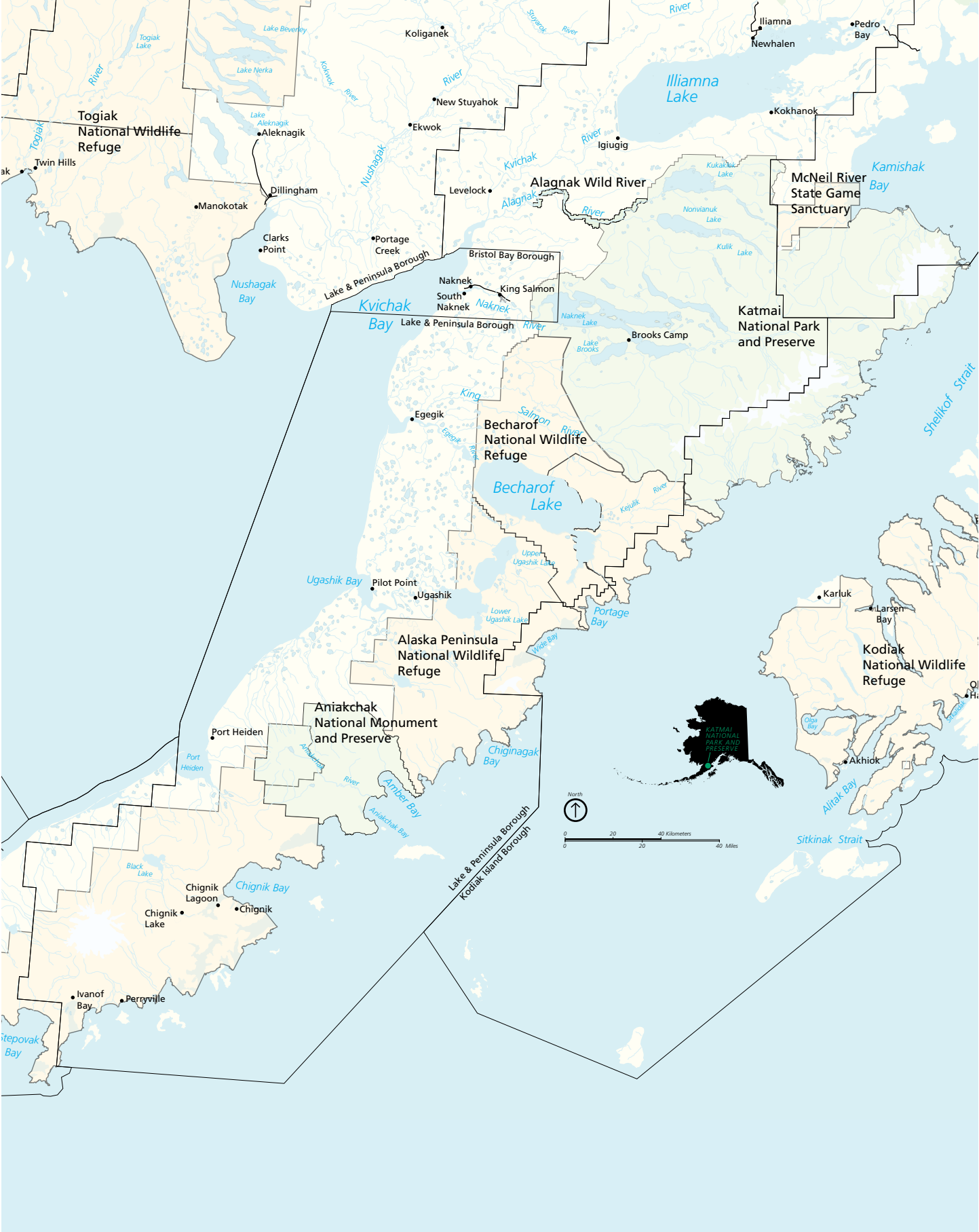
People have traditionally caught birds and gathered eggs, sour dock, wild celery and fiddlehead ferns along the Alagnak. In the summer camps, fish are gathered for smoking, salting, canning, and freezing for the winter. When dogs were used as the major mode of transportation, fish was stored for them too. Long ago, fish was stored in underground pits and was used to make

fermented fish heads, a delicacy. In the fall season, salmon berries, blackberries, blueberries and cranberries are gathered and stored for winter. Wild game such as caribou and moose are hunted. After they have consumed berries, bears are ready to eat. In the late fall, whitefish are harvested and stored for the winter. In the winter, smelt, trout and grayling are caught by ice fishing. Trapping is still done to provide fur for hats, mittens, coats and household use such as throw rugs and furniture coverings.

Salmon drying on a traditional rack.



Neighbors on the Alaska Peninsula



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge

A land of towering mountains, active volcanoes, misty fjords, steep cliffs, deep bays and long beaches, the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge stretches nearly 340 miles along the Alaska Peninsula and encompass about 4.3 million acres. Elevations range from sea level to the summit of Mount Veniaminof at 8,225 feet (2,507 m).

Located approximately 330 miles (547 km) southwest of Anchorage and 55 miles (89 km) south of King Salmon, the refuge is bordered on the north by the Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, and to the south it is split into two sections by Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve.

Phone: 907-246-3339
Email: akpeninsula@fws.gov
Web: www.fws.gov/refuge/alaska_peninsula/



Becharof National Wildlife Refuge

The Becharof National Wildlife Refuge contains a variety of landscapes within its 1.2 million-acre boundary including rolling tundra, wetlands, glacial lakes, rivers, rugged cliffs and volcanic peaks. Land elevations range from sea level to 4,835 feet (1,474 m) at the summit of Mount Peulik.

Approximately 295 air miles (475 km) southwest of Anchorage and 10 miles (16 km) south of King Salmon, the Becharof National Wildlife Refuge is situated between Katmai National Park and Preserve to the north and the Alaska Peninsula Refuge to the south.

Phone: 907-246-3339
Email: becharof@fws.gov
Web: www.fws.gov/alaska/nwr/becharof/index.htm



Alaska Department of Fish and Game



McNeil River State Game Sanctuary

Many of the same conditions that make Katmai National Park and Preserve such prime bear habitat are also found at McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. McNeil is famous for its large brown bear population and for the opportunity it affords a small group of visitors to watch bears fishing and interacting in a natural setting.

To reduce the human impact on bears at McNeil, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game limits the number of visitors to 10 people per day by means of a permit lottery. Permit applications are due by March 1; a \$25 application fee is required. Winners are announced in mid-March. Each permit is issued for a four-day block of time, from June 7 through August 25.

Phone: 907-267-2253
Email: dfg.dwc.mcneil-info@alaska.gov
Web: <http://1.usa.gov/s9aSFI>



Alaska State Boroughs

Bristol Bay Borough

The "Gateway to Katmai National Park & Preserve" and the "sockeye capitol of the world," Bristol Bay Borough is located 284 miles southwest of Anchorage between two of the most productive salmon rivers in Alaska.

Yupik, Athapaskan, and Sugpiat Alutiiq people jointly occupied the Bristol Bay area for thousands of years. The first salmon cannery opened on Kvichak Bay in 1890.

Today, the Bristol Bay fishing industry is one

of the largest and most valuable in the world. Commercial fishing and salmon processing are economic mainstays.

Naknek, South Naknek, and King Salmon have a combined population of just over 1,250 people. Naknek is the seat of the local government and the major commercial center.

King Salmon, connected to Naknek by the 15.5 mile (25 km) Alaska Peninsula Highway, serves as the transportation center and is the site of a for-

mer U.S. Air Force Base. South Naknek is a more traditional rural community and is not connected to the other communities in the borough by road.

Phone: 907-246-4224
Web: www.bristolbayboroughak.us/



Lake and Peninsula Borough

Located southwest of Anchorage on the Alaska Peninsula, the Lake and Peninsula Borough encompasses nearly 24,000 square miles—about the size of West Virginia.

Incorporated in 1989, the borough includes 17 communities with a combined population of about 1,800 people grouped in three distinct geographical areas: the Alaska Peninsula/Pacific side, the Alaska Peninsula/Bristol Bay side, and Iliamna Lake/Lake Clark area.

The topography varies from the mountainous

terrain of the Aleutian Range in the east to the vast lake and marsh-dotted lowlands in the north and west. Lake Iliamna is the largest lake in Alaska and the second largest lake in the nation. Lake Clark has long been associated with extraordinary scenic beauty.

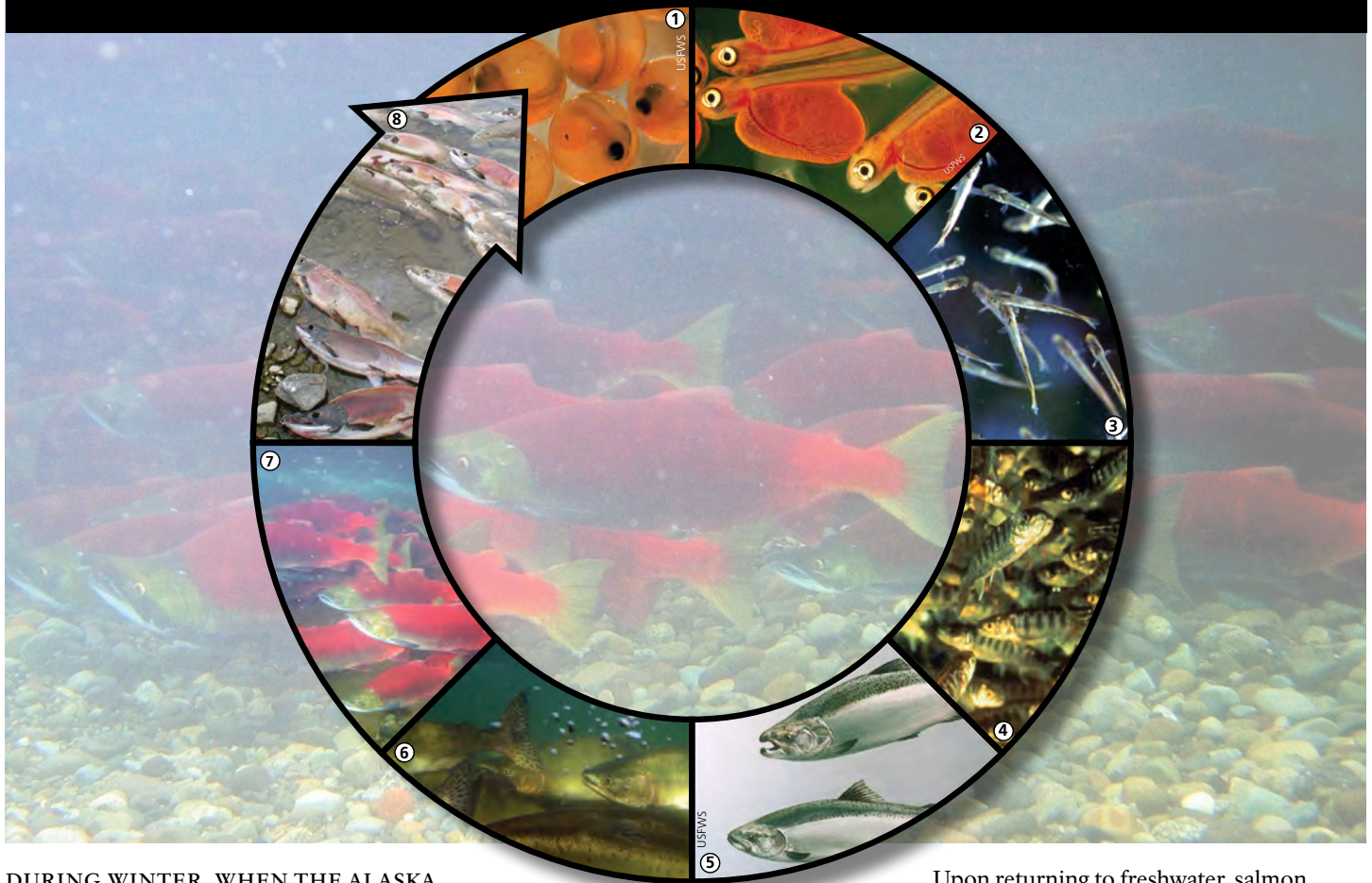
Major rivers in the area provide outstanding recreational opportunities and the largest run of sockeye salmon in the world. Commercial fishing, sport fishing and hunting, bear viewing, subsistence, recreation and tourism, and resource exploration are important economic activities

that rely on the bounty of the Lake and Peninsula Borough's landscape.

Phone: 907-246-3421
Web: www.lakeandpen.com



Cycle of the Salmon: Lessons in Survival



DURING WINTER, WHEN THE ALASKA Peninsula is locked under ice and snow, salmon eggs incubate quietly in well oxygenated streams and lakes (1). Last fall, adult salmon struggled against nearly insurmountable odds to in order to spawn. Every stage in a salmon's life illustrates their ability to survive and their drive to reproduce.

After incubating, salmon eggs hatch in mid-winter. The larva, called alevins (2), remain in the nest feeding on the yolk sac still attached to their bodies. They may even migrate deeper into the stream gravel for protection during this vulnerable period.

Salmon fry (3) emerge from the gravel between April and June and swim to lakes where they live for one to two years feeding primarily on zooplankton. Vertical stripes called parr marks help to camouflage them from predators.

Salmon smolt (4) imprint on their natal streams and lakes while migrating to the ocean. Along this journey, they undergo many physiological changes to prepare for

a saltwater existence. Salmon prepare to enter a totally new environment, whose conditions they cannot know until they get there. Substantial changes to the kidneys and gills are required for the fish to survive the harsh transition from freshwater to the salty ocean.

Salmon will spend 1-4 years in the ocean (5), depending on the species. Salmon in the ocean are bright and silvery in color to hide them from predators like orcas, seals, and sharks. In offshore waters, salmon are among the most abundant fish and use keen eyesight to find and catch prey.

Most sockeye salmon are between four and six years old when they begin migrating back to the watersheds where they were born (6). Sockeyes may travel 60 kilometers or more each day during this long journey. Water temperature, ocean currents, day length, the earth's magnetic field, genetics, and other factors may all determine the precise timing and pattern of the migration.

Upon returning to freshwater, salmon stop eating. 95-99% of spawning salmon return to the same lakes, rivers, and streams where they were born. They smell their way upstream following the odors of the water they imprinted upon when they first migrated to the sea. Red pigment from sockeye salmon flesh is transferred to the skin and eggs. Their bones soften and sockeyes develop a distinctive humped back, green heads, and an elongated jaw (7).

Female sockeye excavate several gravel nests, collectively called a redd. To do this, she fans the gravel violently with her tail to winnow away sand and silt which would smother her eggs. Males and females release milt and eggs simultaneously. Up to 1,000 eggs are laid in each nest. Sockeye spawn in their natal gravel beds across the Alaska Peninsula during late summer and fall. They die shortly thereafter, and nutrients from their decaying bodies drive the cycle once again (8).

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- Provides in-depth information online to help you explore Alaska;
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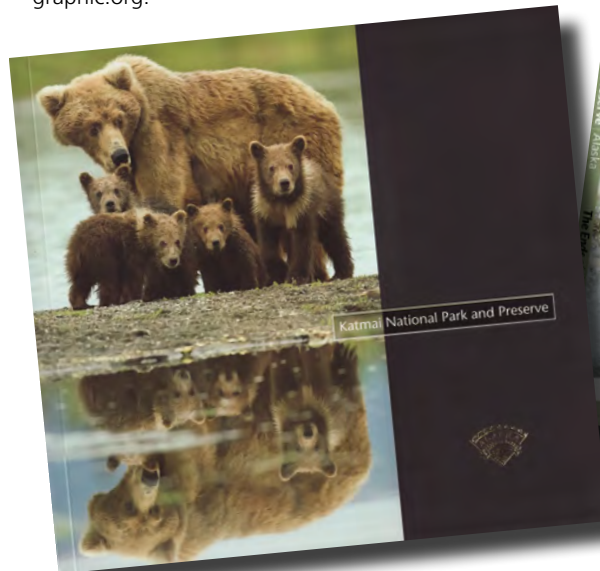
New Book and Movie Available

A new book and movie highlight the wonderful features and history of southwest Alaska. Get them both from the Alaska Geographic Bookstore.

Katmai National Park and Preserve by Andromeda Romano-Lax explores the fascinating story behind the world's largest volcanic eruption of the twentieth century. This cataclysmic event not only transformed a remote corner of southwest Alaska, it brought this dynamic and culturally rich landscape to the attention of the outside world.

Ends of the Earth: Alaska's Wild Peninsula, narrated by N. Scott Momaday, contains stunning high-definition footage of Katmai and Aniachak, exotic lands of towering volcanoes and the greatest concentration of brown bears on Earth. The film captures the essence of southwest Alaska—both its wildness and its historic past.

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Exploring the Human History of Katmai

NPS/M. HOHNER



Katmai Village was once a major center of trade on the Alaska Peninsula. Volcanic unrest forced residents to flee the area and abandon their homes in June, 1912. This is the village as it looked in 1913.

Learn about Katmai's People, Past and Present

THE ALASKA PENINSULA MAY SEEM like an untouched wilderness where living and geologic forces have always dominated, but when you visit Alagnak, Aniakchak, or Katmai, you are following in the footsteps of hundreds, even thousands, of people before you. Certain places, like the Brooks River area, have been a bustling hub of human activity for millennia.

People have used the rich resources available in the Brooks River for nearly 5,000 years. In *Story of a House*, archaeologist Don Dumond illuminates this rich history by recounting the discovery, excavation, and reconstruction of a semi-subterranean home site along Brooks River.

The human story of Katmai is also intertwined with geology of the land. In the past, volcanic eruptions disrupted and displaced people and even whole cultures on the Alaska Peninsula. The Novarupta-Katmai eruption of 1912 irreparably altered the

lives of the people who called the Katmai region home.

To learn more about these stories and the human history of Katmai, go to <http://go.nps.gov/katmaihistory>.



Katmai's Heartbeat

Every spring, the Bristol Bay region bustles with activity. After a long winter, boats are moved from dry dock into the water and working women and men flock to the area. Why? Because the salmon will soon arrive.

Katmai National Park and Preserve and Alagnak Wild River protect critical habitat for sockeye and other salmon. These fish are the foundation of a complex ecological system, and they are intricately woven into the cultural and economic fabric of the area. Salmon are the heartbeat of the ecology, economy, culture, and history of the Katmai region.